

The White Album

Adam Fieled

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As-Is: “I’m So Tired”

Grain: “Dear Prudence,” “Back in the USSR”

Back in the U.S.S.R.

They talk in hushed tones:
can't say a damned thing.
Town walls, built of cloaks,
daggers, rabbits ski-jumping
magician's hats. Here, we've
had endless ineptness, but
at least we can say whatever
the fuck we want. Porn is
no more than a mouse-
click away, Comedy Central
has the best news, Britney's
publicly displayed twat
has gone in for heavy, fruit-
ful usage, we're maxed out
on credit card bliss. Complaints
are like air: legal, safe, unlimited.

Dear Prudence

I'll make this an exhortation:
sit yourself, Buddha-like,
into a trance: you are a child
again, traipsing Wisconsin
woods. There is light, sun,
spring. You are near a lake,
you hear the name "Niedecker,"
what it means. You see words
in stones, phrases in trees,
metaphors beckoning from
sand-slopes. It is your duty
to know names and translate
what you see in woods, trees,
lakes. It is what you've been
sent to Earth to do. You
have done it, will continue
to do it, it is all-in-all, is
all you are. Aqua lake-foam
comes to your mind's surface,
your mind is your body, it is
there to be embodied, it is
ripe and good. You are glad.

Ditch those fucking beer cans.

Glass Onion

Put in an Opera, or a Beam,
into my Revolver is every
ounce of Jewish guilt, in
what fucks should've been,
what drugs should've cured,
what art couldn't win,
what time I was bored,
and shot out when I feel
my finger on your trigger
("you," myself, strangers)
so that I am relieved to
find myself outside myself
once again, like an astral
entity that has plumbed
Bermuda's Triangle weeks
at a time. It comes up guns,
roses, bent-back tulips,
dove-tails, duck-tails, fucks.

Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da

Molly strips at The Office
in Center City Philly: high-
school dropout, smokes pot
at the drop of a hat, has a
kid in second grade, gained
a lot of weight from downing
lager during down-time. She
told me her story because
Desmond beats the hell out
of her, she's ditching him—
needs a better gig. Health
insurance does not exist for
her or her kid, she lives in
fear of Italian Market ruffians
beating down little Bradley.

I brought her back to
my pad, fucked her, told
her I would gladly be a
father to Bradley if I had
the time, or the money,
but I don't. Life goes on.

Wild Honey Pie

Yellow sun-dressed, Gucci
glasses: *oy vey ist mir*, what a
shiksa for a humble poet.
I'm out of fashion, then?
I don't get the privilege of
taking off designer threads
anymore? You've found a
bloke with cash, a bigger
putz, or just more credit-
carded liberality? I'll make
a bloody volta of cynicism,
wine, masturbation: we've
learned to fuck from Internet
porn, our generation.

The Continuing Story of Bungalow Bill

Barthelme's Bill (a dwarf, in
Snow White) refuses to touch
anyone: touch is corruption
to him. I have this crazy urge
to confess to him my life story.
Bill must live in a bungalow—
the farther you go from soil,
the more you suffer from being
untouched. I've just moved
into a fourth-floor apartment.
I'm dwarfed by my raunchy
history— what I need is Snow
White, doing bathroom lines,
forcing a four-hour fuck-fest.

While My Guitar Gently Weeps

For five hundred
years, they've said
the same thing:

*these are the end
times, this is the
flood, the end of
things, apocalypse.*

Funny how the
people talking
(including me)
never seem to
be the ones in
the street giving
food to the home
less. In fact, much
of this speech occurs
at meals, over grunts
of animal satisfaction.

You must be well
fed to pontificate:
I, like many others,
(hungry when full)
wonder what to do,
while my guitar
gently weeps, &
my life sleeps.

Happiness is a Warm Gun

A Medusa-mad gaze pierces
through this laptop's screen,
group e-mails on MySpace,
a digital banshee getting friend
requests from vampire blokes
“piercing the depths of life”—

He downloads each profile
picture, keeps a file by his
bed, they all give head in his
dreams, he creams on these
pictures until they're wrinkled
like prunes, then prints them
out again, continues to wank—

I need an X-Tube fix,
people fucking on camera to
fulfill American fantasies of
fame and numbers of folks
watching them fuck or even
just suck each other off, I
need to see people fuck—

Mother Superior jump the gun
Mother Superior jump the gun
Mother Superior jump the gun
Mother Superior jump the gun

We know how to fuck
from what's on the Web
yet we're awkward in bed—
she tried to give me head,
blood, bloody, bleeding, bled—

Martha My Dear

If one speaks of American
Roulette, how can you not
come up? Each bourgeois
domicile your domain, you
were icing on your own
damned cupcakes; a napkin
over-folded, a turkey basted
with blood. Alas! They could
not kill your will to cash in;
you will suffer without ever
starving. Poets (other than
me) will not sing you (or
God help them). Hold your
head up, you silly girl, see
what you've done— the
world has been, remains
your bite-sized snack.

(I wish you were toasted)

I'm So Tired

Do a wash (six quarters)
first thing in the morning,
continue moving boxes to
the new place, prospects
having dwindled (she's so
annoying on Facebook, I
can't stand group posts,
get a life, girl), I live in a
Dickensian nightmare of
sensual deprivation, all
by myself (play me some
Air Supply, sounds like a
tour in 'Nam)(or opera,
also, might be good, for
obvious reasons) (damn
this new bathroom, can't
turn the water off without
breaking my goddamned
wrist), worst of it is that
there's no end in sight, so
I sit in the courtyard (which
doubles as a playground
for toddlers), have another
cigarette, curse my lottery
ticket, it was such a stupid
get (you'd say I'm putting
you on but it's no joke), I'd
give you everything I've got
for little piece of ass, dude.

Blackbird

Curtis Arboretum, Wyncote:
if you ramble through, quite
early, pre-dawn, there is a
slope on which you may hear
blackbirds sing (thirteen ways,
not really), for a moment
pretend you're Shelley (many
think I am anyway), ecstasy
in the old sense (transcendence,
selflessness, not just pleasure)
manifests consciously.

Curtis Arboretum, Wyncote:
it says something that this
nocturnal vision hinges on
pretenses (that this is Albion
rather than a Philly burb),
because we do not associate
suburbs with ecstasy, old or
new (transcendence or joy),
the good reason for this
is that suburbs are a middle
realm, falling short of both
urban & pastoral essences.

Curtis Arboretum, Wyncote:
here is where Romanticism
ends: unbelievably, my cell
rang as I lay scoping the sun
rise. It was my friend in
Wisconsin, also scoping,
from an arboretum,
hearing a blackbird's song.
All I could think was this:
the blackbird would make
a great ring-tone for Sprint.

Piggies

Cacophonously, registers
clank: mall's martial law.
Daisy's at the mall, she
sees herself in sunglasses
that festoon her face, Zen
contentment from what
rings in her head, signs:
"Gucci," "Polo," "Armani,"
religion is television, sex
absorbed from porn, she's

twenty-one, drinks because
she is obliged to, fucks also
because she is obliged to
(gagging on cock, harder),
believes material is real, real
is material, spends her life
devouring the hopes of Karl
Marx, who she thinks is a
comedian, with two brothers—

Don't Pass Me By

Why don't you
respond when I
e-mail you, out of
the blue, quoting
James Brown &
Heart like Plato
& Aristotle, just
to invite you to
join my parade?
Are you afraid
(maybe), a little
shy, or have the
gossip-mongers
brainwashed you
into believing in
my legendary
misogyny? Anne,
it's all bullshit,
I'm bleeding,
Crazy on You,
more than a
rock anthem
(co-opted by
The Smiths), it's
how I feel about
potentialities that
we can begin to
explore, should
you ever decide to
think for yourself.
I quote Doors:
*The time you ran
was too insane,
we'll meet again.*

Why Don't We Do It In the Road?

Fuck me Fuck me Fuck me
FUCK ME FUCK ME FUCK ME
(fuck) (me) (fuck) (me) (fuck) (me)
fuckmefuckmefuckme

like like like like like like like like

I'm a I'm a I'm a I'm a I'm a I'm a I'm

FuCKiNg

Fuck

I Will

Long labor in thought when
I in labor lie; that is, while we
couple I revisit the playpen
where I played & was free.
Original innocence is leaves,
scattered along a winding
way, seldom seen/retrieved;
our kind of tie's not binding—
of course, the seminal moment
seems like forever, more
than a little death, but openness
lasts for ten seconds, no more.
I think our bodies grow rich,
innocent, on this sustenance.

Julia

I was a fly in your skirt, I
sullied the air distilled from
breaths you took that I
wasn't privy to. What then?

A first kiss in your kitchen,
a consummation & rapid
withdrawal, as if I were a
bee to you that, stinging,
grew moribund. Still I buzz.

Rocky Raccoon

Rocky has a government
agency sinecure: *hot shit*.
Oil has resulted in an
increase of liquidity &
financial viscosity, but
Rocky's days are numbered.
He will retire on savings.
He will rant at liberals on
TV, remembering good
old days, lipstick on what
he drew first, then spit,
Rocky collapsed in the
corner. Rocky's a goner.

Birthday

I would like you to dance—
if you're shy, take a chance—
stagger tipsily into me,
cocktail spitting drip on
pink dress, I become a
link from your Malkuth to
general Kether, that is we
get all tantric & shit, all
ductile elements grind
away together, Malkuth
means dance me to
the end of love, on
this, your thirtieth,
welcome to pre-middle
aged bliss, kiss, kiss...

Yer Blues

“two parts cute, one part art”,
that’s what I said about her, I
also meant to say “very nice
craftsperson, very crafty but
falls far short of actual art, it’s
like Trix, for kids”, that’s what
I thought about her, in fact
that’s what I think of most
of them, “my disdain is that
of an artist looking at crafts-
people”, of course it’s disdain,
“only the Mozarts know who
the Salieris are”, but what
crux may come depends on
me staying clean as possible,
“craftspeople like basket-weavers
often get caught in their own
twine”, especially when they
try to figure out what’s over
their heads, it wouldn’t be
if one of their cute parts
could turn into art, but it
won’t, in fact it’s not cute
as much as it is crustaceous.

Mother Nature's Son

Fourth story window:
trains roll by, en route
to 30th Street, twenty or
more an hour, tops of
trees beyond tracks,
which are elevated to
window level, this is
on a hill, wrecking ball
crane beyond trees,
trains, parking lot in
foreground, not much
depends upon this, it's
just another view of
one kind of nature,
human kind, which
finds it convenient to
always be moving faster
than nature intended,
a field of concrete,
below, the street.

Everybody's Got Something to Hide Except Me and My Monkey

A cigarette is a monkey:
it swings between lips,
dangles, burns brightly,
adds perk/emphasis to
each still passing moment.
I am cutting back, myself,
monkeys on my back
make me go deeper, fly
higher, but there is a
price to pay, I hack it
up in phlegm, monkeys
laugh at a sore throat
that could be to me
what TB was to Keats.

Sexy Sadie

Talk about making a fool:

it's not just that you live

in post-avant Camelot

it's that you don't understand

why anyone would chafe against

the confines of your dried-up old womb

it's that you're all about you

but some of us will not be accessories

we might even have a sense of self-worth

leading us to an embrace

of self-formulated & regulated poetics

& of putting our dicks where we want to

Helter Skelter

*I'll be anything
you want me to
be, man. If you
think I am Jesus,
man, then I am
Jesus, man. In-
side/outside: it's
the same thing,
man. People call
me a criminal, &
I never touched
nobody, man.
This guy in office
killed all these
people & I never
touched nobody,
man. You all
created me, &
you created him
too. Me & Bush:
I'm God, & he's
Satan, man. He
should be put
inside, man, in
permanent
solitary confine-
ment, just
like me. Then
we'll see how
tough he really
is, man, then we'll
see who's God &
who's Satan. I'm
happy inside, man,
because bars are
freedom: perfect.
Throw Bush in
here too, I think
he's ready (laughs)*

Long, Long, Long

Angels talk to me,
they say, *hey, how*
are ya, good to see
ya, let me raise your
vibratory frequency,
you'll write thirty
pages in a week, I'll
prove my divinity
by manifesting in
dire circumstances,
mud-thick summer,
scum-rich Philly,
I'm disguised as a
South Philly yob,
let's pretend you
didn't know me
for an angel, etc.

So, to me, that's
God: anything
that helps me
do my work.
Inversely, what
stops me must
be the Devil,
who's much
more efficient,
systematic, &
ready for action.

(I've learned
Buddha's
non-reaction)

Revolution #1

Revolution: throw
out your TV. Out
a fourth-story
window. May it
land on heads of
advertising execs.
This is stage #1
of revolution. By
the end of this
side, we'll hit #9.

Honey Pie

You've got an agent
for your script, huh?
We can strip each
other of everything,
one baby to another
saying I'm lucky to
meet you, weak-
kneed from what
is unscripted, must
remain offstage
until lights out, no
camera, action.

Savoy Truffle

Off to Feinstein & Fervid—
a bagel with cream cheese,
washed down with coffee,
orange juice, even a little
whiskey for tough days
when I'd just as soon stay
in bed watching X-Files,
eating flank steak, even
fucking, but at least there's
lunch to look forward to,
corned beef club with cole
slaw on the side, pickle,
chips, talk to my chums
about X-Files, hey how
about those Phillies, here
have another root beer,
maybe filet mignon tonight
as a special treat for being
made a partner at Feinstein &
Fervid, oh how turbid, that's
two more hours work a day,
two more hours til cow-meat,
TV, sex, those really valued
things that make life worth it
for us at Feinstein & Fervid,
who are you calling stupid?

Cry Baby Cry

Twelve o'clock a meeting
round the table for a
séance in the dark— it's
a small black-curtained
room on the second-floor
of a row-home in Logan
Square. No carpet softens
the floor for those who
sit. General shudders
quicken. Ouija Board
answers "No" to every-
thing except *Are you here?*
This spirit is a negative
creep. Its ambience is
perpetuated by a piercing
blue hypnotic light that
passes from person to
person like a bong.
It spells out a song:
I'd love to turn you on.

Revolution #9

At the Satellite coffeehouse Chomsky-ites have tattoos of Eastern symbols
(I-Ching, yin-yang, Buddha) all over their arms the screen-saver
for the computer is ImpeachBush.com while they sit huddled over pamphlets
printed on cheap paper put together at Kinko's about how to make bombs
overthrow the gov't grow hemp smoke hemp know hemp be hemp
or the way to join a food co-op that has exotic berries with anti-oxidants
& which has been going in West Philly since 1969 but these kids
were raised on indie punk and their bands only know a few chords
but everything about suffering and it comes out in songs like glass shards
no one has Health Insurance many have bikes get in accidents
get addicted to pills but no one much cares Health Insurance is for yuppies
what is wanted is a community anti-everything material goods
are derided in favor of principles but there is no public outlet to bring them
to the attention of the masses who are disdained anyway for not having
tattoos playing in punk bands reading Chomsky shopping at Mariposa
knowing what scum directs the media what polished, rehearsed scum
polished, rehearsed, privileged by luck and education to brainwash us with
imbecile illusions of happiness but these kids ain't happy either
they want something else what they can't admit to wanting a real voice,
real status real position real influence real opportunity
& it's not going to happen here at the Satellite so they sip brackish drinks
unsweetened by sugar give out their pamphlets promote their bands
find themselves at thirty borderline derelict addicted to Percosets
that they get through covert means which are unreliable some have canes
as if this were an old age home which it is as Shelley was aged by radicalism
unchecked by moderation emotional, psychological, or otherwise
so that it's the world against them and they ape contentment with this
scenario that sears its lines onto their foreheads oh the irony
that Penn is just a few blocks away where Chomsky went, and me
where real influence is possible owing to prestige and money
but don't call West Philly "University City" here you'll get spit on
because it's seen as a marketing ploy to destroy the Satellite
its esprit de corps atmosphere of huddled hairiness tattooed twists
wanton sex perverse reliance on self-medication & impending age
which reduces sangfroid to bitterness just like black coffee & black coffee
is what the Satellite does best Edith Piaf could sing a chanson
just for the Satellite only in triple time like a punk song everyone
would bow their heads, knowing truth knowing failure knowing
salvaging a life from radicalism is a scary venture not for sissies
or those who want Health Insurance to keep them alive

Good Night

Trevor O'Doyle was buried
yesterday, for memorial
ten bands for free at the
Khyber, Trevor's friends,
even some that were on
the tour-bus that crashed.
I saw Trevor's girlfriend
hooking up with Dave
Pidanka in the corner,
thought what is this, *The
Big Chill* (remember Meg
Tilly)? I got home from
the show late/wasted,
smoked a resin'd bowl,
felt deadness grow in
my gut: Trevor's really gone.
He'd never smoke a bowl
again, or get wasted, or
pissed at his woman for
hooking up with Dave.
I stared into the abyss.
There was nothing there.
Nothing said hello to me:
I cried like a stoned baby.